

Each of the four poems you hold in your hands (you did print this out, didn't you?) embraces movement and progression, of a moment held within a moment - of certain reconciliations. We stand behind our dogs, write letters in other languages, find the incomprehensible finally direct and sharp in a moment within a moment. I hope you enjoy the voices of Donald Ryburn and Graeme Mullen - new to MiPo~Print - and regulars Coleen Shin and PJ Nights. Take a moment to read, and enter the moment within. ~ John Eivaz

renting the perfect tree

Too many, too far away, on map function, the ETA is under-rated. Or is it me? Where is my list, my Mapsco?

The one with the red ink, light to heavy strokes through the zipcodes, the sometimes unfathomable shorthand-

3-2-2 w/wbfp, wdc, lgyrd, gdhood.
first, last, 325per/pet, trees, trees, trees!

They are a map of my travels, the coffee rings.
This one is almost perfect. The qualifier is a no deal.

One too many trees, or one tree too few, or a dangerous tree can be the undoing. A shade tree of beautiful sprawl

but too far away as to be tauntingly beckoning out there by the mailbox. Yards too big, small, slanted, unfenced,

broken fenced, half a fence. No offense, I bought the dog.
Great big dog. Gorgeous dog. Nice dog, sit.

~ Coleen Shin

M I MiPo~Print

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MiPo~Print

Harbor seals at Fort Popham

Twenty or so
of the sloe-eyed, whiskered souls –
more seals than the humans watching them
dive for lunch. One stops to exchange
inquisitive glances with me,
but what can I tell him
of my world

immersed as I am in his – a peer
of the long-necked bird snaking
silver fish, of him and his sleek-headed
companions flipping tail-up
under a fortress

almost organic to the shore.
Barnacles and seaweed have blurred the lines
between hewn block and ledge, man and nature,
though it was not always so
for a stronghold newly built for civil war

and garrisoned twice more.
Its soldiers never fought a battle
yet they must have felt the threat,
their vision narrowed by windows
meant for guns.

We adults feel it now, that threat,
though dulled here in this sparkling moment,
in this sphere of the seals,
where our children can play and dream

mock-war of Peter Pan and the pirates
or the fort a castle, where songs
of its long-tressed princess
drown out the cannons
and fear.

~ PJ Nights

In The Rough

~Graeme Mullen

I wake to a blaring and stumble
to the sink, needing the scrape of a razor
to freeze my bloody eyes from wavering.

With each rinse, stubble falls
onto the porcelain, black specks that pattern out
like iron filings. They remind me

of the grass piles that lined the edges
of the golf course, the one in our town
where every 4 o' clock the mowers

would gnaw on the backs of the greens,
crawling and buzzing like swarmed insects,
terrifying the water-birds

into squawking, flapping frenzies.
One summer, when I was fourteen,
I caddied there with my friend, Adrian.

There was a day when it looked like rain, so
I left early. He stayed, hauling his heavy bag
through thickets of moist air

until the clouds were dark blue, the color
of heron eggs lodged in shade. It was a swollen blue
that sucked up warmth from the sand traps,

stored it inside those brooding shells
until it was enough to force cracks open.
And then lightning dribbled down

onto the grass-cuttings, hot electric yolk that spat
from one pile to the next, conduction
blackening the blades with oily heat—

A wave of it leapt into the bag of clubs.
Adrian crumpled like a cut rope, fell kneeling
in a cloud of burnt smells—

grass and hair and skin. I made it to the hospital
a few hours before he died. When I came in,
he was smiling. Through the white bandages—

charred lips, looking like spat meat
wrapped up inside napkin folds.
This is God being direct, he kept saying,

and now, as memory seems to condense in drops
on the cold glass, trailing down in rivulets that streak
and fade like old words, my hand strays,

nicks a spot on my left cheek. I look down
to see the razor's glint, mean and sharp-white,
like the hunger in a thief's eye.

Dragi Kamen

~Donald Ryburn

"....I asked what these dark strips of land were all about...."

Ranier Maria Rilke, Letter to Clara Rilke

I am writing you this love letter in Serbian,

So that you, my beautiful, Teutonic blonde hair dresser,

Will think me charming and intelligent,

Perhaps find me beneath slender fingers at 2:00 pm,

Fingers that should be far away immersed in Prokofiev's Piano Opus #12
Legende,

Instead of bluing an old Praguian woman's hair,

Hair that will be immediately hidden beneath a hand-dyed silk scarf,

".....perhaps you are correct, I have been without thinking, leading
myself into patches of clump birch trees and great, yellow twisted
leaves. She had commandeered my esoteric self within her white dress and
now I only come as a beggar of beauty with sad pillows. Everything now
suddenly very English and tepid. Here it is spring....."

I exist, my lovely Princeza,

As if Thursday evenings were the same for us,

As if against the sky we became De Chirocoan shadows elongated across a
field of red poppies,

This evening sun burns our cheeks,

Twin glasses of Compari,

Standing near-empty,

A rose with indefinite color,

Falling to the terrace floor in slow-motion.

Dragi Kamen - Precious Stone